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**A. D. Švejcer L. B. Nikol'skij, Introduction to sociolinguistics (Linguistic  
Literary Studies in Eastern Europe, 14). Amsterdam: John Benjamins,  
1986. Pp. xii + 179. A. D. Švejcer, Contemporary sociolinguistics. Theory,  
problems, methods (Linguistic Literary Studies in Eastern Europe, 15).  
Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 1986. Pp. 193.**

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is to show how we are beginning to study the ways in which children use speech-situation routines for developing communicative competence, and to refocus the reader on additional modes of defining competence. Chapter 6 looks at the ways family, school and peers influence language competence: here, Romaine must deal with the variety of models for how children and adolescents network with each other. My own work with early-to-middle adolescents is beginning to show complicated, intricate networks that sprawl pragmatically out of tidy categories into multidimensional maps, and I read this chapter, which details home/family, school and peer influences, first. Heath, LePage, Cheshire, the Milroys join Sankoff, Cedergren, Labov, Hymes and Trudgill in this provocative discussion. Trudgill provides the editor's preface; his commentary on her 'concentration on the variable aspects of language use and development' (ix) is worth re-reading at this point, for Romaine is concerned to present methodologies for variation as well as variability.

Chapter 7 surveys literacy, primarily as it bears on communicative competence, which reminds us of the ranges of literacies a reading/writing person actually might draw upon. Romaine cites the Bullock Report of 1975 in her Bibliography; future students of literacy movements might also want to check the works of James Britten, Nancy Martin, Tony Burgess, Peter Medway and others who are concerned with the ways literacy is offered, proffered, chosen and refused. The University of London group, drawing its strength from the same models, mentors and methodologies Romaine discusses, is currently involved in cross-disciplinary (and cross-Atlantic) work in writing/literacies through its connection to the Bread Loaf programme (University of Vermont) headed by Dixie Goswami, and for which Heath, Cazden, and others have taught. This programme may yet move public policy beyond those testing ventures which Romaine chronicles in Chapter 8, particularly in regard to her subtitle: '8.3 Displaying competence: who decides what counts and how?'. Plain speech, leading to the brief summary, primarily concerned with implications, characterizes Chapter 9, on acquisition and theory, which sums up the seeming opposition between generative and competence theories for the acquisition of communicative competence: the wheel has come full cycle.

The Bibliography is a degree candidate's reading list; the Index is but summary; the Notes are helpful.

Reviewed by BOYD DAVIS,  
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A. D. Švejcér & L. B. Nikol'skij, *Introduction to sociolinguistics* (Linguistic & Literary Studies in Eastern Europe, 14). Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 1986. Pp. xii + 179.

A. D. Švejcér, *Contemporary sociolinguistics. Theory, problems, methods* (Linguistic & Literary Studies in Eastern Europe, 15). Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 1986. Pp. 193.

The two books to be reviewed here have been published by Benjamins in their series Linguistic & Literary Studies in Eastern Europe, which is intended to give scholars unfamiliar with Slavic languages the possibility to become acquainted with some of the research that is going on in Eastern Europe. This is a very laudable enterprise and it is to be hoped that this series meets with the success it deserves. Textbooks and monographs giving an account of the state of the art of linguistic and literary research in Eastern Europe and summarizing work not available in translations are particularly needed. *Contemporary sociolinguistics* was published in Russian in 1976. Subsequently Švejcér rewrote his book together with Nikol'skij, the author of another Russian monograph on sociolinguistics that had appeared in the same year. Their joint work, *Introduction to sociolinguistics*, appeared in Russian in 1978. Both books were then translated by Švejcér and they are now published with a time lag of eight and ten years. They present – in spite of some minor revisions – a picture of sociolinguistics as it existed in the mid-seventies, roughly the halfway stage of the entire period of the existence of sociolinguistics. This would not be a serious drawback if the two books presented a more or less comprehensive picture of sociolinguistics in the Soviet Union at that time, or if we were presented with descriptions and judicious evaluations of the language situation in the Soviet Union. Unfortunately, both books fail on both counts. In spite of the explicit aim to reflect 'the present stage of sociolinguistic

studies both in the Soviet Union and abroad' (*Introduction*, vii), the emphasis clearly lies on the latter.

Both books follow the same pattern. First the philosophical foundations of sociolinguistics are discussed against the background of Marxist sociology. In a second part an attempt is made to establish the subject matter of sociolinguistics, its boundaries and its conceptual framework. The authors stress the importance of investigating the causal relationship between social factors and the language system. Thus, they are only marginally interested in studies in which extra-linguistic features, such as the social status of the speakers, are correlated with the realization of individual linguistic items. Švejczer criticizes 'attempts to formalize relations between the social structure and language in terms of a simple correlation of independent and dependent variables without any analysis of causal relations between them' (12). The last part deals with methodological problems and discusses the difficulties of collecting and analysing sociolinguistic data. The close similarity in the structure of the two books is only thinly disguised by the fact that one is split up into three parts whereas the other is divided into four chapters, but the similarity goes much further. A lot of material is almost identical in the two books. The following two quotations may serve as an example which could be supplemented by large numbers of similar quotes:

*Methods of Collecting Sociolinguistic Data*

Collecting raw data is one of the major challenges of sociolinguistic research. The reason is self-explanatory: a study of the determinant role of social factors in relation to language is ineffective without due regard for numerous stratificational and situational variables, ... (*Introduction*, 135).

1. Methods of Obtaining Sociolinguistic Data

The problem of obtaining initial data is one of the most complex problems of sociolinguistic research. The point is that a study of the determinant role of social factors in relation to language requires that the researchers should take into account a considerable number of stratificational and situationable [*sic*] variables, ... (*Contemporary sociolinguistics*, 148).

Two almost identical books cannot fail to raise questions about the editorial policy of the series, especially since those parts which appear in only one are so few that they easily could have been integrated into a single volume.

One of the major concerns of the two books is with problems of multilingualism, bilingualism and inter-ethnic communication, understandable if one considers the multitude of problems arising out of the complex language situation in the Soviet Union. However, readers hoping for a more or less objective description of some of these problems are likely to be disappointed. The following two quotations are unfortunately typical of what we learn about the language situation in the Soviet Union.

While in the capitalist world diglossia, just as bilingualism, reflects a structure of a society based on inequality, in the socialist community this phenomenon is of fundamentally different character (*Contemporary sociolinguistics*, 112).

... in the Soviet Union the use of Russian as a language of interethnic communication is based on its voluntary study as a second language, as a language promoting cultural and economic development and concerted activities of the Soviet peoples (*Introduction*, 85).

Even for a reader with little knowledge of the specific language situation in the Soviet Union this must sound more like political propaganda than an objective description, and indeed an entirely different picture is drawn by a number of contributions to a focus issue of the *International Journal of the Sociology of Language*. According to these articles, Soviet language policy has moved far away from Lenin's principle of the equality of all languages to one of widespread Russification, which is in many cases not quite as voluntary as Švejczer & Nikol'skij would like to make us believe: 'Though still encased in a shell of Leninist rhetoric, the legitimizing formulations for the present status of Russian are, in fact, perilously close to the tsarist concept of Russian as "the cement of the Empire"' (Kreindler, 1982: 7). The resolutions of the conference on the teaching of Russian to non-Russians held in 1979 in Tashkent point in the same direction; Russian is to be taught even to pre-school children and it is to be promoted as an everyday language for non-Russians at home and in out-of-school activities (youth organizations, etc.). Rakowska-Harmstone (1982: 109–110) concludes that 'if fully implemented, the program would

reduce the supposedly equal languages of Soviet non-Russian nations to the level of home and folklore vernaculars'. However, apart from the quotations mentioned above, there is very little political propaganda in the two books under review, but unfortunately there is equally little on the language situation in the Soviet Union.

One of the books, *Introduction to sociolinguistics*, is quite explicit as to its intended readership; it is 'primarily intended for language students at the undergraduate level' (vii). This, however, contrasts sharply with its price of \$56. Such a prohibitive price will effectively rule out the possibility of any university teacher adopting it as a course book. Nevertheless, in spite of all the weaknesses of the two books, their conflation into and publication as one volume would have been a worthwhile contribution to the literature.

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**J. Horvath**, *Focus in the theory of grammar and the syntax of Hungarian*. Dordrecht: Foris, 1986. Pp. viii + 241.

This book represents an investigation into how Hungarian word order changes when there is a focused element in the sentence. To give a simple example, in the Hungarian equivalent of *I like John*, the word *John* can be stressed only by using the word order *I John like*. The phenomenon is analysed in detail from the point of view of Government and Binding theory, with extensions and modifications to that theory being proposed where necessary. A prior knowledge of Hungarian is required if one is to get the best out of the book.

Horvath proposes that focused sentences in Hungarian can be derived from the basic sentence structure by means of the transformation Move  $\alpha$ . The detailed instantiation of this rule is discussed for Hungarian, a language in which focused and interrogative, but not relative, elements occupy the same position. Note that the book does not attempt to describe the basic structures upon which the transformation acts; hence the need for a prior knowledge of the language. In the course of her analysis, Horvath points out an important problem: the proposed version of Move  $\alpha$  involves the systematic violation of the c-command and trace-erasure conditions. She shows how a possible escape from this problem involving the use of a stylistic movement rule only leads to further problems. Instead, therefore, she re-examines the theory and suggests a new interpretation of the principles of Government and Binding designed to reduce the significance of, but not altogether eliminate, such violations. The justification for this new interpretation is, however, in the present reviewer's opinion, neither clear nor convincing.

It goes without saying that different languages have different means for assigning focus to elements, and Horvath contrasts English, where focus can be freely assigned to any element by stressing it, with Hungarian, where only the element immediately preceding the verb can be assigned focus. How can Universal Grammar encompass these two types of language? The author proposes a new Focus Parameter, which has two values: Focus Parameter 1 is for English and related types of language, Focus Parameter 2 is for Hungarian. The Bantu language Aghem is mentioned as apparently also belonging to this second class. One problem not noticed in the book is the following logical contradiction. According to the analysis presented, languages with Focus Parameter 2 have the following properties:

- (a) the verb cannot assign Case features to its complements;
- (b) the verb can assign Focus features to its complements.

Yet Focus and Case features are claimed to have the same status.

The book as a whole falls into the trap of excessive emphasis on theory, so that it is easy for the reader to lose track of the main points. Several characteristics of Hungarian which a